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CRESTVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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January 2018

EVENTS CALENDAR

Monday, January 8: Crestview Neighborhood Association Meeting. 7:00 PM at Crestview United Methodist Church, 1300 Morrow St.

Thursday, January 11: Brentwood Elementary School Welcome Walk, 9:00 AM. For more information, contact Brentwood Elementary at 512-414-2039.

CodeNEXT Petition Drive Mixer

Here's another chance to turn in or sign the petition putting CodeNEXT up for a public vote.

There will be a mixer with complementary light appetizers at Frisco's at 6801 Burnet Rd. on Tuesday, January 9 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

For more information, go to www.letusvoteaustin.org.

Brentwood Playground Survey

By Nancy Mohn Barnard

The Brentwood Park Playground Improvement Committee is currently working on finalizing playground design plans. After collecting feedback about overall design via surveys and town hall meetings, the committee is now ready to decide on pieces of equipment for installation.

Based on community input, the committee has selected several pieces of equipment to consider. Please take our survey and tell us which equipment you like best: https://goo.gl/forms/twmhWwODoc8m6oUJ2.

After the equipment is mostly finalized, the committee will begin work on the next round of grant applications, along with continued fundraising efforts. So far, we have raised $22,000, which is a great start. Thanks to everyone who has supported this community project thus far. Have a question or comment about the playground improvement project? Email us at playbrentwood@gmail.com.

Howdy Neighbor!

By Mike Lavigne, CNA President

Happy New Year! Well, that was quick. It seems like just yesterday things were normal and now, well... it's complicated.

A national political unease has permeated our psyche and will likely have effects on us for a long time to come. Locally, we are seeing the effects of national politics on our discourse and decisions on almost every major issue facing our city.

Social media has its entertainment benefits but it remains a lousy place to discuss policy. As we have seen nationally and locally, lofty language and seemingly well meant sentiments are often just the product of very carefully polled and targeted marketing efforts.

This is especially true in much of the anti-neighborhood rhetoric in Austin these days. It is easy to look at your phone and believe what you read. Your heart pumps a little harder, your face gets a little flush and you just HAVE to comment! I sure have.

For instance, if you believe what you read on Facebook you can't both be a liberal and enjoy living in a house in a neighborhood. As the former head of the Texas Democratic Party and 20 year Democratic political veteran, I can tell you that just isn't the case. There is nothing liberal about encouraging demolitions of existing affordable housing.

I encourage you to remember what it is that much of this social media is vying for: your attention. But there are real people around you who could use your "likes". Maybe tell someone in person, "hey, nice coat!" instead of thinking that clicking the like button is your good deed for the day.

Having spent a fair amount of time in bars and restaurants (tip your servers!) I have come to the conclusion that there's little difference between the opinionated drunk at the end of the bar and many people on the socials. You can fire back your witty reply to their absurd position but it never just ends there. They usually end up talking too close and too often, involving their friends and talking so loud you just want to "close your tab" (see what I did there?) and hit the road. Sober people don't usually want to get beligerant even if they agree with you, just like how online opinions can be out unbalanced.

In 2018 we will need to deal with reality instead of feel good (or bad) opinion mongering. Remember that the decisions ahead of us regarding our neighborhoods will have real and lasting impacts on those of us wishing to age in place or raise families. Increased entitlements will absolutely raise the amount we pay in taxes and will absolutely not give us more needed infrastructure.

In a bar, it is easier to know who the drunk's friends really are, who's paying their tab, who's driving them home, who they are really talking to... On social media, it isn't as clear.

This year, let's be good neighbors to the people physically around us. After all, the people around you will have a bigger hand in raising your kids and affecting your quality of life than any amount of clicks.

Let's also resolve to not let the chaos around us get us down, take our vices in stride, wave at people instead of clicking them... and turn the music up a little louder and rock out when you need to. No doubt you've passed me in my car doing just that.

Finally, I'll take some presidential privilege to send a shout out to Lilah, who is the only one I know for sure reads this every month. -Mike

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NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER

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City Council Passes Two Resolutions on Demolitions

The City Council passed two resolutions introduced by Council Member Kathie Tovo at their December 14 meeting dealing with residential demolitions, many of which are occurring in the Crestview neighborhood. The first resolution dealt with safety issues such as asbestos and lead. Currently, mitigation for asbestos, lead, and other toxic chemicals during residential demolition isn't required. City staff is to redesign the demolition permitting process and present it to Council later in the spring following stakeholder meetings. Given the known health hazards related to lead and asbestos, protection of surrounding neighbors is important in our neighborhood.

The second resolution, dealing with how demolitions reduce the amount of affordable housing, directed the City Manager to "explore the feasibility of establishing a fee that property owners would pay to the City to demolish single-family and multi-family residential structures" and directed the City Manager "to report back with recommendations for initiating a nexus study no later than April 1, 2018." Furthermore, the resolution states: "If such a study establishes a relationship between demolitions and the loss of affordable housing, the City Manager would then recommend levels of appropriate fees and a method to direct that revenue to the City's Housing Trust Fund to create affordable housing opportunities in the same geographic area."

Local AISD Schools Frozen to Transfers in 2018-19

Because their enrollment is expected to be above capacity, Brentwood Elementary, Lamar Middle, and McCallum High School are among 28 schools that the district has announced will be frozen to transfers in 2018-19 according to an article in the Austin American Statesman.

As a result, priority transfer requests, including sibling, majority-to-minority and tracking transfers, will not be accepted. Requests for transfer to schools not included on the list of 28 frozen schools will be accepted between January 2 and January 31 and will be given equal consideration, according to the district. For more information, go to www.austinisd.org/transfer or call (512) 414-1726.

CNA Membership Renewal

Thank you to all of the folks who supported the work of the Crestview Neighborhood Association through their memberships this past year. Membership dues are $10 per household per year on a calendar year basis with renewals due in January. Renew your membership by using the form below or by visiting www.crestviewna.com and paying through PayPal. You can also use the form to become a new CNA member. Thank you!

Make checks payable to Crestview Neighborhood Association.

CNA
CRESTVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Crestview Neighborhood Association
PO Box 9505, Austin, TX 78766
www.crestviewna.com

All residents are invited to join
Annual dues are $10 per household

Date:_____ New Member [ ] Renewing Member [ ]

Household Members (List up to 4):_____

_____

Address:_____

Email:_____ Phone:_____

Austin PD Crime Search Report for November 2017

Crime	Street	Date	Time
Agg Assault Strangle/Suffocate	69XX Reese Ln	11/7/17	1:48
Agg Assault	9XX Taulbee Ln	11/29/17	0:58
Agg Robbery/Deadly Weapon	9XX Taulbee Ln	11/29/17	0:58
Assault Contact – Sexual Nature	21XX St Joseph Blvd	11/17/17	16:50
Auto Theft	9XX Mountaineer Ln	11/23/17	15:33
Burglary of Vehicle	72XX Easy Wind Dr	11/3/17	11:38
Burglary of Vehicle	21XX Anderson Ln	11/9/17	7:44
Burglary of Vehicle	2XXX Pasadena Dr	11/14/17	10:19
Burglary of Vehicle	77XX Burnet Rd	11/16/17	18:23
Burglary of Vehicle	72XX Easy Wind Dr	11/26/17	13:24
Crash/Leaving the Scene	69XX Lamar Blvd	11/14/17	17:36
Found Controlled Substance	2XXX Hardy Cir	11/15/17	18:16
Suspicious Person	1XXX Taulbee Ln	11/6/17	16:04
Theft	8XX St Johns Ave	11/6/17	21:39
Theft	12XX Madison Ave	11/30/17	12:09
Theft from Auto	72XX Lazy Ln	11/24/17	12:07
Theft of License Plate	75XX Burnet Rd	11/3/17	16:03
Theft of License Plate	72XX Easy Wind Dr	11/9/17	10:06

January Safety Tip

While "carjacking" is a relatively rare crime, it can be serious. Potential carjackers generally focus on individuals who are unaware of their surroundings or are unprepared. To avoid being a victim, keep doors and windows locked, drive and park in well-lit areas, avoid getting out of your car in remote areas, approach your car with your keys in hand and be aware of places where someone might hide or suspicious persons in the vicinity. If possible, do not get in the car with the suspect or flee as soon as you are able to safely do so. Protect your person over possessions.

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Creating Congested Neighborhood Streets: Eliminating Parking in CodeNEXT

By Community Not Commodity

Overview

One of the paradoxes of the CodeNEXT model for density is that while it seeks to increase the number of residents on or visitors to a particular piece of property – and therefore the potential number of vehicles and vehicle trips – it decreases the required parking for that property. Eliminating parking on property creates additional space for more density and for more intense uses. The street becomes part of the parking lot – in effect subsidizing development. These reductions are substantial, and the additional vehicles will constrict and congest residential streets, designed for lower traffic volumes and parking loads, with parked vehicles, higher traffic volumes and vehicles circulating, looking for parking. The incompatibility is multiplied because without onsite parking the densities and intensities of the uses can be larger (which is intended), generating more vehicle trips and the need for more parking – of which there will be less. Over-parked neighborhood streets make it difficult and dangerous for residents, visitors, delivery vehicles, service vehicles, garbage pickup, repairs, and emergency services. Neighborhood streets will be less walk-able, less bike-able, less safe and less family-friendly.

Some details

Residential. At the same time that CodeNEXT is increasing the number of households per lot, the on-site parking requirement is cut to one parking space per household (unit) – half of what is required today for single-family homes.

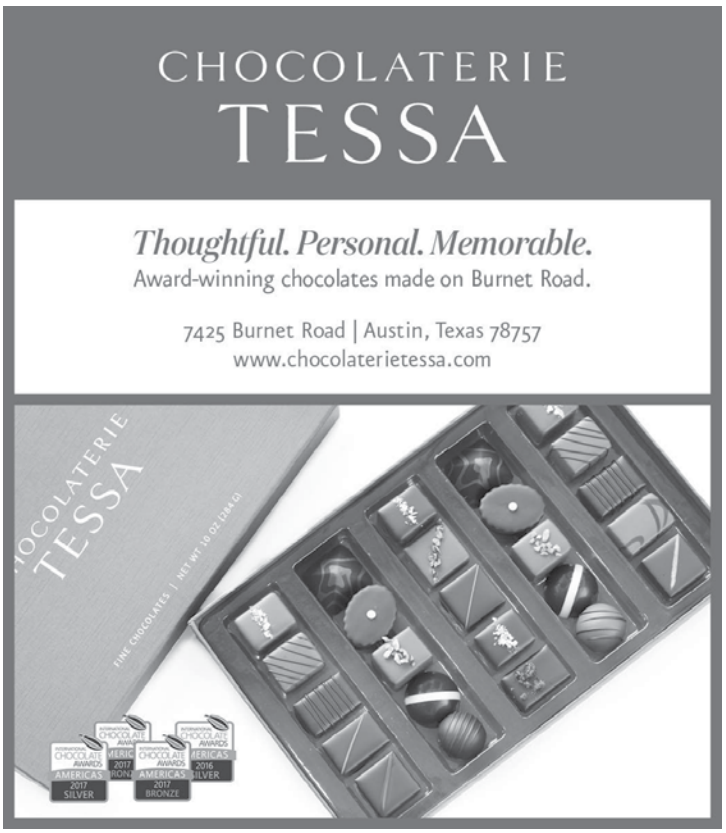
Commercial. At the same time that CodeNEXT is increasing the volume of commercial traffic generated by zoning districts in and around neighborhoods, it is reducing the parking requirement for those uses. In CodeNEXT, onsite parking, other than for restaurants, is generally reduced. Compare e.g. CodeNEXT § 23-4D-4040 with LDC 25-6 Appendix A.

	Today	Draft 2	Reduced By
Retail	1 space for each 275-sq. ft.	1 space for each 350-sq. ft.	20%
Banks	1 space for each 275-sq. ft.	1 space for each 350-sq. ft.	20%
Office	1 space for each 275-sq. ft.	1 space for each 500-sq. ft.	45%
Medical Serv.	1 space for each 200-sq. ft.	1 space for each 500-sq. ft.	60%

These are all very significant reductions that will have a very significant impact. But CodeNEXT authorizes even more parking reductions.

Additional Cumulative Reductions. Significantly, the reduced parking requirements will be eligible for additional cumulative reductions of up to 40% for a variety of reasons such as being within a half-mile of a transit corridor (e.g. a major arterial with a bus line) or the simple provision of bicycle parking. §23-4E-3060.

CodeNEXT, continued on page 5



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CodeNEXT, continued from page 4

Further, the Director of Planning, whose decision is unreviewable, may eliminate the onsite parking requirement altogether by authorizing offsite parking 1,000 feet away without considering the impact of the offsite parking facility on traffic patterns and nearby residents. Compare LDC §25-6-502 (C) with CodeNEXT §23-4E-3060.

An example of what these reductions mean. A 2,600-sq. ft. medical office is required to have 13 parking spaces today. Under CodeNEXT, that same office would only be required to have 5 spaces – barely enough to cover the medical staff. In fact, applying only 20% of the allowable 40% additional reductions, that number is reduced to 4 parking spaces. The end result is grossly inadequate parking.

Conclusion

When nearby commercial uses do not have adequate parking, patrons are forced to turn to neighborhood streets. Commercial parking is pushed deeper and deeper into the neighborhood, compounding the problems caused by the additional on-street CodeNEXT residential parking. When vehicles line both sides of a neighborhood street, the width is constricted making it difficult for one car, much less two cars, to navigate. This creates a dangerous situation for pedestrians and cyclists, a condition exacerbated by the lack of sidewalks. These are the conditions that make it difficult for families with children to stay in a neighborhood. These are the conditions that onsite parking requirements are supposed to prevent. These are the conditions that CodeNEXT will, instead, create.

The CodeNEXT approach to parking contradicts the CodeNEXT sales pitch. On the one hand, the City promotes further densification as fully compatible with existing residential areas, and on the other, it promotes parking policies that undercut that promise. It doesn't have to be this way.

Small Art

By Marilyn Querejazu

Ever wonder why you find such interesting art hanging in bathrooms? A small, well-lit bathroom is a perfect environment to experience art up close. It's an intimate space…a mini gallery. Just you and the art.

When we think of great art we usually think of large paintings and sculptures, and we go to large galleries and museums to see them. We try to absorb the meaning of immense works of art in crowded, cavernous rooms.

Dutch collectors of the 17th century preferred small works of art in small spaces. They built cabinets and small rooms (also called cabinets) within their homes to house their private collections. They wanted special rooms to be alone with their art: Small rooms that were easy to heat, where one could close the door and sit and think. Dutch painters of the time (like Vermeer and Rembrandt) added to their income by creating small paintings for domestic collectors to enjoy at home. Cabinet art, or small art, was usually 24 inches or so in either direction and often smaller, but very finely detailed. The kind of art you can just fall into.

See the types of paintings you would have found in a Dutch cabinet in the 17th century in this 4-minute video www.nga.gov/audio-video/video/dutch-flemish-cabinet-galleries.html.

Thanks to indoor plumbing we all have a mini gallery or two in our homes. Kid's art, family heirlooms, modern art, cartoons, fabric art, weavings, postcards – it all works when thoughtfully displayed. Your bathroom is the perfect place to show off and enjoy unique pieces of art.

"Without atmosphere a painting is nothing." Rembrandt

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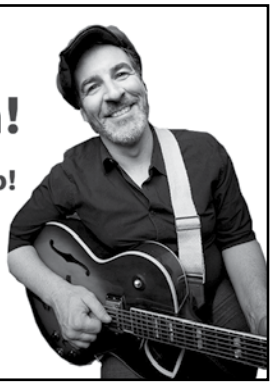

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